

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM



THE ART OF DELEGATION

Delegation is an investment of your authority. It is an act of empowering others so they may act on your behalf. With this empowerment is an accompanying responsibility and accountability that is bestowed upon others to produce results. There are three primary reasons for delegating:

- Distributing the workload amongst the members within a team
- Allowing more people to be actively involved
- Developing members of a team for their personal growth as well as for the benefit of the organization

At times, leaders faces challenges in delegating their responsibilities as it sometimes appears simpler to complete a task yourself rather than explaining and training someone else. Another common challenge with delegation is when the leader delegates their undesirable tasks or does not spend ample time explaining or training a person on the delegated task.

Four basic delegation strategies

1. Telling

The leader designs the job, then delegates it to a member.

2. Participating

The leader identifies a job that two or more members might want to work on, then works toward gaining a commitment from the members to work together on completing the job.

3. Selling (coaching)

The leader involves members in developing a project and encourages them to volunteer for the tasks.

4. Delegating

The leader involves members in developing a project and communicates his/her confidence in the members to follow the project through to its completion.

The strategy a leader implements to delegate a task depends on the members. Knowing the members of your organization is critical to making delegation work. Newer members may require more explanation than more experienced members. Have trust in your members, learn to be flexible in your delegation style, and use the delegation strategy that best suits your individual members.

Do delegate

- When there is a lot of work to manage
- When a member has a particular skill or talent that would suit a task
- When someone expresses an interest in a task
- When a member might benefit from the responsibility (e.g., an emerging leader in your group)

Don't delegate

- Your own "hot potatoes" (e.g., tasks that are time sensitive, an emergency, and/or confidential)
- Your specified responsibilities
- Tasks you would not be willing to complete
- Tasks that a member may not possess the necessary skills to complete the task successfully

BEFORE YOU DELEGATE

- **Decide if the task needs to be delegated**

Do you want to give it away? Do you enjoy it? Is it so important that true delegation cannot occur? Be true to yourself and delegate tasks that will encourage member development, efficiency, team work, and member empowerment.

- **Choose the right person for the job**

Match member's interests and talents with delegated tasks. (If members truly are not interested in a task, they might not do a good job.) Sometimes members who could do the job extremely well may be insecure about their abilities. Communicate your trust in their skills. Their motivation will be higher when they know they are trusted.

- **Define the job and set mutual expectations**

Give detailed explanations for what the job involves, including all key points. Try to focus on the results rather than the method. Also, work with your members to set mutual expectations. Members are more likely to back a decision if they were involved in the decision-making process and understand how the decision was reached.

- **Set a deadline**

Members will usually feel more responsible for a task when they are held accountable. With no deadline, it is much easier to procrastinate and lose motivation. Work with members to set deadlines. (Make the deadline reasonable so they are not pushed too hard.)

- **Determine methods for follow-up**

Work with your members to set a time for review of performance. This could be a meeting to check progress or a phone call to see if they have any questions. The follow-up should be mutually determined at the start. This way, members know you are not trying to hover but instead are trying to learn how work is progressing. Criteria for evaluation at this point should also be predetermined so the leader will not be overly critical of progress. Also, let your members know that if they need clarification of the task or have questions, they should ask.

- **Train your delegates**

Make sure they know how to do the task. Take time to train them, if necessary. Initially, training someone may take more time than doing it yourself. But in the long run, training others will improve your efficiency and allow others to develop their skills.

- **Delegate your authority**

This ties in with setting times for follow-up. As a leader, you need to allow your members the responsibility to make day-to-day decisions. Sometimes, their decisions will not be the same as yours. That's okay. Everyone needs the opportunity to try new approaches. Just because it is different does not mean it's wrong. Members can easily lose motivation if they have no room to think creatively and act as they see best. Have trust in the members and try to give them the freedom to work without you looking over their shoulders.

- **Evaluate performance**

After the task has been completed, evaluate the task based on the expectations and criteria set when the task was delegated. If certain aspects were left out when setting the initial job definition, the delegate should not be criticized for leaving them out. Work with the delegate to determine how you and the delegate feel the performance turned out, and also how the performance can be improved.

- **Acknowledge achievement and give recognition**

Almost nothing is worse than pouring oneself into a task, having it turn out perfectly, and then being ignored by the person who delegated it. Give recognition and praise for the work members have done. By giving recognition and letting them know you appreciate them, they will feel a further sense of pride in